



# Speaking at a City meeting

Welcome!

This information is designed to help community members prepare to speak before the City Council, Council Committees, and other City advisory boards and commissions.

City Council meetings are for City elected officials to deliberate and act on policy matters pertaining to City business. The Council invites the exchange of ideas with community members. While the City Council may appear intimidating when meeting as a formal body, be assured that the Council is made up of a Mayor and Councilors who care about your thoughts and issues and will listen to you carefully!

The Council's regular meetings are the first and third Mondays of each month at 6:30 pm, unless the Monday is a holiday in which case the meetings are held the following Tuesday. The meetings are usually held in the Downtown Fire Station, 400 NW Harrison. A larger meeting room is scheduled when greater than normal public interest in a subject or issue is anticipated. To receive notices about Council meetings or other City meetings, you may sign up on the City's website at [www.corvallisoregon.gov/notifications](http://www.corvallisoregon.gov/notifications). These notices, which include links to the agenda and meeting packet, would be sent to your email address on the Thursday before the Council meeting.

An opportunity to address the Council is provided toward the beginning of each Council meeting. If a public hearing is also scheduled, it will begin at 7:30 pm. Testimony related to the public hearing topic will be accepted at that time. A three-minute timer is used for public testimony to ensure an equal amount of time is afforded to everyone who wishes to address the Council. The timer consists of a small box with green, yellow and red lights that sits on the testimony table. The light will start at green and change to yellow when the speaker has one minute remaining. When three minutes have passed, a chime will sound and the light will turn red. Council sub-committees, advisory boards, commissions, or task forces may or may not establish a time constraint for public testimony.

**OVER** ➡

## ***Guidelines for Participating at a City Meeting***

Public comment is encouraged at City government meetings. Here is how to participate:

1. Sign up to speak. A clipboard will be available at the testimony table and if you wish, you may sign up before the meeting begins. The Mayor will use the list to call people forward to speak, but he/she will also ask if anyone wishes to speak who did not previously sign up.
2. When the Mayor calls your name, proceed to the speaker table and speak into the microphone. Begin by stating your name and then express your view or offer your suggestions in a courteous and considerate manner. As a rule, the City Council does not carry on a dialog with the speaker; however, the Mayor and City Councilors may ask follow-up questions. Please keep in mind this is not a forum for public debate. When addressing the Mayor or City Councilors, it is common to address them by their titles such as Mayor Smith or Councilor Jones. Remember to direct all remarks and questions to the Council through the Mayor. It is not appropriate to address the audience or the staff directly. It is recommended that you seek resolution of a complaint through the appropriate City department before bringing the matter to the City Council.
3. You are welcome to submit your comments in writing to the City Recorder so they may be attached to the meeting minutes. In addition, if you have more comments to offer than what you can provide during the allowed three minutes, you may submit those to the City Recorder as well.

### **Special Note:**

The City Council requests that all persons in attendance at a City Council meeting avoid conduct which is unreasonably loud, disruptive, or profane. Rude, slanderous, or threatening remarks will not be permitted. Whistles, yelling, foot stomping, clapping, or speaking out of order are also discouraged. Anyone doing so may be removed from the Council Chambers.

### **About the Mayor and City Council:**

The Corvallis City Council is composed of the Mayor elected at-large to a four year term and nine City Councilors elected by Ward to a two-year term. [If you are not sure of your Ward, a map is available on the City's website.](#)